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ABSTRACT

In an attempt to define rhetorical discourse, the paper examines the speeches of Ahab, the main character from Herman Melville's book, "Moby-Dick." The paper first determines if Ahab's speeches actually fall into the category of rhetorical discourse by examining his major speeches, and then ascertains whether his speeches are bombs (successful speeches) or bombastics (unsuccessful speeches--partially synonymous with the term "mere rhetoric" when it is used in a derogatory sense). The examination takes place within the context of the closed system of the novel itself. The paper concludes that (1) an analysis of Ahab's speeches revealed that amidst their metaphorical language there is power; (2) the power is predicated on something more than style and something greater than figurative language; and (3) the power of Ahab's speeches is grounded in their content and developed through the correct usage of numerous rhetorical principles. (MS)

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Ahab's Speeches: Bombs or Bombastics?

A Rhetorical Criticism

by

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In Herman Melville's book, Moby-Dick, it may be said of the protagonist, Ahab, that when he speaks, he speeches. By this statement one would mean that Ahab does not engage in normal conversation when he talks, instead, he participates in what might be more accurately described as rhetorical discourse.[1] With this thought in mind, the purpose of this paper will be to examine Ahab's major rhetorical discourses in order to ascertain if his speeches are bombs or bombastics.[2] This examination will take place within the context of the closed system of the novel itself. The specific speeches to be considered will be: (1) Ahab's speech to the crew, (2) Ahab's speech to $Starbuck_1$, (3) Ahab's speech to himself, (4) Ahab's speech to $Starbuck_2$, and (5) Ahab's speech to Starbuck and to the crew.[3] However, before one can accurately determine if Ahab's speeches are bombs or bombastics, one should consider in some depth the following two questions: (1) What is rhetorical discourse? (2) Do Ahab's speeches actually fall into the category of rhetorical discourse?

Earlier in this paper the term rhetorical discourse was defined as "those discourses spoken or written which aim to influence men."[4] Three characteristics of rhetorical discourse which are germane to this study may be deduced from this definition.

First, rhetorical discourse may be either spoken or written.

Second, rhetorical discourse is persuasive in intent.[5] Its purpose is to influence an audience. Its success or failure in achieving this end has no bearing on whether it is rhetorical.[6] Persuasive intent, not effect, is the criterion by which a discourse is judged rhetorical.

Third, since rhetorical discourses aim to influence men, they must have an audience. As will be pointed out later, this audience may be internal or external to the rhetor.

After having established the three characteristics by which a rhetorical discourse may be identified, the following question remains to be answered: Do Ahab's speeches actually fall into the category of rhetorical discourse? An examination of the five speeches selected for study in light of the three characteristics of rhetorical discourse should provide the reader with an answer to this question.

Of the five communications in question, there is only one in which Ahab is not speaking to one or more members of the crew. In this case he is sitting alone in his cabin at sunset thinking or speaking to himself. While the speech is not delivered in the normal sense of the term, it nevertheless is rhetorical. Robert T. Oliver indicated that one's inner thoughts may definitely fall within the province of rhetoric when he wrote:

"Rhetoric" can be understood as a mode of thinking which seeks to

determine the relationships that exist between the truth of the matter under consideration, the purpose or personal goals of the one doing the considering, and the needs or susceptibilities of those who are to be influenced in their attitude toward the subject.

It should be noted that in terms of this conception (as also in Aristotle's) rhetoric is a mode of thinking or a mode of "finding all available means" for the achievement of a designated end. Accordingly, rhetoric concerns itself basically with what goes on in the mind rather than with what comes out of the mouth. To state the matter simply, one may be just as fully occupied rhetorically while seated alone at his desk as when standing before an audience of listeners. Rhetoric is concerned with factors of analysis, data gathering, interpretation, and synthesis. Rhetoric involves any and all conceivable types of thinking and feeling, with the single and essential proviso that they must be directed to the triad of relationships that bind the subject, the aim of the speaker, and the reactions of the listeners into one dissoluble unity.[7]

Ahab is occupied rhetorically in this instance to the extent that he is first, concerned with factors of analysis, data gathering, inter-

pretation, and synthesis; and second, carrying on a discourse spoken in his mind, by his mind, to his mind. Since this passage is the only one of the five open to dispute on the grounds that it is not discourse which is spoken or written by the rhetor, and since it has been indicated that Ahab is engaged in a rhetorical mode of thought while conversing with himself, one may conclude that all five passages exhibit the first characteristic of rhetorical discourse in that they are spoken or written.

The second identifying characteristic of rhetorical discourse is that it is persuasive in intent. Is the aim of Ahab's speeches to persuade, or do they have some other end? Perhaps their intent is, by and large, expository. Perhaps it is cathartic. Perhaps the purpose of Ahab's speeches varies with the situation. Perhaps they are simply representative of the deranged thoughts of a monomaniac.[8] While a case could be made for many, possibly all, of these interpretations, the following examination of each of the five speeches in question indicates that their goal is to influence men.

In Ahab's speech to the crew, he is not only informing them of the reason for the voyage;[9] he is attempting to convince the crew to follow him in this endeavor. If Ahab's purpose in speaking had been purely expository and without persuasive import, he could have completed the speech in one sentence. Furthermore, he would not have needed,

and probably would not have employed, a series of rhetorical questions designed to elicit the attention and fire the excitement of his auditors. Similarly, had the end of the discourse been solely expository, Ahab probably would not have sought to maintain interest and encourage incentive by offering a sixteen dollar gold piece to the man who first sighted Moby Dick.

All of the above devices are effective persuasive techniques which will be examined at a more meaningful place later in this paper. However, at this juncture it is sufficient to conclude that the goal behind Ahab's speech to the crew is to influence men.

Similarly, the primary purpose of Ahab's speech to $Starbuck_1$ is obviously to militate against the mate's opposition toward the purpose of the voyage. Starbuck is hostile, and Ahab seeks to overcome this antagonism and convince him to join with the crew rather than opposing them in their pursuit of the white whale.

While only a perfunctory survey of the preceding two discourses indicates their persuasive intent, a more penetrating analysis is required if one is to understand the persuasive significance of Ahab's speech to himself.

There is little doubt that Ahab is engaged in rhetoric insofar as rhetoric may be taken to mean "a mode of thinking or a mode of 'finding

all available means' for the achievement of a designated end."[10] However, in this instance the two questions with which one should deal are: (1) What is the "designated end" which Ahab wishes to achieve through this speech? (2) And of much more cogent concern, is this end persuasive? If the purpose of the speech is persuasive, then it may be rightly catergorized as exhibiting one of the qualities of rhetorical discourse. However, if the intent of the speech is not persuasive, then the discourse is not rhetorical and need not be considered in this paper.

In this passage Ahab could be addressing himself for one of several different reasons. For example, the speech could represent an attempt on his part to psychologically reinforce some of his vengeful attitudes toward his dismemberer. Under this interpretation, the communication would be one of persuasion to attitude.[11] Or, Ahab could be speaking with himself for moralistic or incantatory purposes. While this dialogue could also be indicative of persuasion to attitude, it might also indicate persuasion to action or persuasion to both attitude and action.[12]

For the purpose of classification it matters little whether the designated end of the communication is to psychologically reinforce attitudes which may be weakening and need to be shored up, or whether the discourse is for moralistic or incantatory reasons, or whether the speech's goal encompasses some purpose heretofore unmentioned. The

pin-pointing and labeling of this speech's designated end is of small consequence. The important factor which needs to be considered is the presence or absence of persuasive intent within the designated end of the discourse.

It has been pointed out that Ahab's dialogue with himself is for the purpose of some form of self-persuasion. Kenneth Burke has indicated the validity of this point of view when he stated:

> A man can be his own audience, insofar as he, even in his secret thoughts, cultivates certain ideas or images for the effect he hopes they may have upon him; he is here what Mead would call "an 'I' addressing its 'me' "; and in this respect he is being rhetorical quite as though he were using pleasant imagery to influence an outside audience rather than one within. In traditional Rhetoric, the relation to an external audience is stressed. . . . But a modern "post-Christian" rhetoric must also concern itself with the thought that, under the heading of appeal to audiences, would also be included any ideas or images privately addressed to the individual self for moralistic or incantatory purposes. For you become your own audience, in some respects a very lax one, in some respects very exacting, when you become involved in psychologically

stylistic subterfuges for presenting your own case to yourself in sympathetic terms (and even terms that seem harsh can often be found on closer scrutiny to be flattering, as with neurotics who visit sufferings upon themselves in the name of very high-powered motives which, whatever their discomfiture, feed pride).

Such considerations make us alert to the ingredient of rhetoric in all socialization, considered as moralizing process. The individual person, striving to form himself in accordance with the communicative norms that match the cooperative ways of his society, is by the same token concerned with the rhetoric of identification.

. . . . . .

As for the relation between "identification" and "persuasion" we might well keep it in mind that a speaker persuades an audience by the use of stylistic identifications; his act of persuasion may be for the purpose of causing the audience to identify itself with the speaker's interests; and the speaker draws on identification of interests to establish rapport between himself and his audience. So, there is no chance of our keeping apart the meanings of persuasion, identification ("consubstantiality") and communication (the nature of

rhetoric as "addressed"). But, in given instances, one or another of these elements may serve best for extending a line of analysis in some particular direction.[13] (Our Emphasis)

In this statement, Burke makes several thought provoking points concerning different aspects of rhetoric. The following five are especially relevant to a fuller understanding of Ahab's speech to himself: (1) Burke indicates, as does Robert Oliver,[14] that a man can be his own audience à la George Herbert Mead's concept of the I addressing its me. (2) A person may seek to persuade himself for several reasons. These may be moralistic, incantatory, or simply for the purpose of allowing one to view oneself in more sympathetic terms. (3) Self-persuasion can occur by means of psychologically stylistic subterfuges with which one may identify. (4) Another of the ways in which a rhetor may persuade an audience, an audience which can be internal or external in relation to the communicator, is through the use of stylistic or formal identification techniques.[15] (5) The terms persuasion, identification, and communication are so interrelated in their functions and processes that there is "no chance" of keeping their meanings apart.[16]

Ahab's identification with and utilization of both psychologically stylistic subterfuges and devices of stylistic or formal identification

in order to produce self-persuasion will be examined at a more appropriate point in this paper. For the present, it is sufficient for the reader to realize that Ahab's speech to himself is persuasive in intent. Therefore it fulfills the second requirement of a rhetorical discourse.

Ahab's speech to $Starbuck_2$ is similar in some respects to his speech to himself. Not only are both communications persuasive in intent, but both discourses are self-persuasive. In this instance, Ahab utilizes a variety of psychologically stylistic subterfuges to reinforce his waning resolve to continue the hunt.[17] He engages in self-pity and self-depreciation.[18] These are tendencies which, while appearing harsh, actually may be satisfying in that they can serve to satiate needs such as persecution complexes and/or other neurotic tendencies. Furthermore, Ahab autistically rationalizes his position by indicating that he is a powerless victim of fate and, therefore, can not be held directly accountable for his actions.[19] Ahab's exact employment of these techniques will be discussed in greater detail presently. The point to be made here is that, as in the previous examples, this instance of Ahab's speaking exhibits the second characteristic of rhetorical discourse in that it is persuasive in intent.

In addition to being inwardly persuasive, this communication can lay strong claim to influencing Starbuck. This claim will be

considered shortly. However, at the present time it is somewhat irrelevant as the discourse in question has already been shown to be persuasive regardless of its effect on the first mate.

The final communication which needs to be evaluated in terms of its persuasive intent is Ahab's speech to Starbuck and to the crew. Here Ahab is confronted with Starbuck's strong objections to the continuation of the chase. Ahab's response includes elements of persuasion directed towards Starbuck, the members of the crew, and himself. Insofar as it encompasses persuasive messages directed to all hands while utilizing a large number of the means of persuasion available in that particular situation,[20] this speech is one of the most eclectic and theoretically persuasive of any of Ahab's discourses.

Having established that all five of the speeches selected for analysis are persuasive in intent, one may move on to a consideration of the third, and final, distinguishing feature of rhetorical discourse--it must have an audience. As it has already been indicated that all of the communications with which this paper is dealing have auditors, it may be concluded that Ahab's speeches possess the three qualities of rhetoric discourse enumerated earlier in this paper.

Now that the characteristics of a rhetorical discourse have been delineated, and now that it has been determined that Ahab's speeches

exhibit these characteristics and are therefore rhetorical discourses, one may more logically proceed to an examination of Ahab's speeches in order to ascertain if they are bombs or bombastics.

In order to more completely analyze the persuasive techniques employed in Ahab's rhetorical discourses and in order to better understand the persuasive effects engendered by these techniques, each communication will be considered separately.

The scene preceding Ahab's speech to the crew[21] is one of tenseness and expectation. Ahab has given orders that the entire ship's company is to be assembled aft.[22] As the crew gathers there is an air of curiosity, questioning, and apprehension among them.[23] They undoubtedly realize that an assembly of this nature is an extraordinary event.[24] After the crew is assembled, Ahab whets their tension. He continues to pace the quarter deck while ignoring the crew and increasing the drama of the event. This technique can be very persuasive as long as the speaker does not overwork it to the point of boring his audience. It matters little whether Ahab utilized the device consciously or unconsciously insofar as its persuasive effect is concerned. Ahab may have been using the time to collect his thoughts before speaking, or he may have been deliberately arousing the audience's anticipation, or he may have been unconscious of any motive whatsoever. This is

largely immaterial. Regardless of whether the technique was used consciously or unconsciously, it was one of the available means of persuasion present in the situation, and Ahab made use of it.

Ahab opens the discourse with a series of rhetorical questions.[25] Speech theorists, both ancient and modern, have indicated that the rhetorical question is an important method of persuasion.[26] Ahab makes good use of this means. He utilizes the questions climatically to produce increasing excitement and enthusiasm among the listeners.[27] The rhetorical questions also serve to facilitate the identification of Ahab's cause with his crew's interest. As Kenneth Burke has indicated, identification of this nature is one of the basic methods of persuasion.[28]

Despite the persuasive impact of the questions, the crew is not cognizant of the influence which is being wrought upon them. They regard the interrogatives as "...seemingly purposeless questions...."[29] One might consider this as an indication of the crew's stupidity, or as an indication of the ineffectiveness of the questions. However, in light of the auditors' increasing excitement and subsequent actions, it is more probably another testimony to the persuasiveness of the rhetorical questions.

Ahab's ignorance of the crew's presence before starting to speak, his use of rhetorical questions, and his display of the sixteen dollar

gold piece are all powerful tools of persuasion. One of the most important, if not the most important, contributions which these devices make to persuasiveness is that they command attention. The heightening tension as Ahab paces the quarter-deck before speaking, the enthusiasm and excitement promulgated by his emotional spewing forth of rhetorical questions, the slow rubbing of "...the gold piece against the skirts of his jacket..."[30] and the dramatic nailing of the gold piece to the mainmast,[31] all of these factors were striking, unexpected, and interesting. They commanded attention.

The role of attention in persuasion can hardly be overestimated. No matter how significant the communicator's message, and no matter how strongly he feels about it, the message will be lost unless his hearers attend to it. The modern theories of persuasion are largely predicated upon the psychological principles of attention. As long ago as 1892, William James stated the basic concept which has become the foundation for much of modern rhetorical theory when he wrote: "What holds attention determines action."[32] Psychologist James R. Angell expanded this principle when he stated:

> No idea can dominate our movements which does not catch and hold our attention. When we keep our attention firmly fixed upon a line of conduct to the exclusion of all com-

petitors, our decision is already made.[33]

H.A. Overstreet summarized this concept by writing that "what we attend to controls our behavior. What we can get other people to attend to controls their behavior."[34] James A. Winans, the founder and first president of the organization which was to become the Speech Communication Association, incorporated the principle of attention into his now famous definition of persuasion which is: "Persuasion is the process of inducing others to give fair, favorable, or undivided attention to propositions."[35]

The foregoing evidence indicates that attention plays a vital role in persuasion. In light of the attention which Ahab's speech commands, one may easily understand why it is persuasive. That it is persuasive in fact as well as potential is attested to by the effect which the speech produces. At the end of the discourse, Ahab asks his crew if they will "splice hands" on the purpose of the voyage.[36] In response to this question, the men answer with great enthusiasm, "Aye, Aye!"[37] There are several other indications throughout the book that the communication produced the desired effect and therefore should be considerd a bomb not a bombastic. For example, Stubb indicates that Ahab's speech was successful in convincing him to pursue Moby Dick.[38] Ishmael points out that he and the other members of the crew gave their oath

to follow Captain Ahab in his design. He also states that after the speech Ahab's feud seemed to be his own and that a "wild, mystical, sympathetical feeling" was in him.[39] All of this evidence signifies that this speech was highly successful in achieving its purpose.

The persuasive power of Ahab's speech to the crew indicates that its author was highly knowledgeable concerning the means of persuasion available in a particular situation. The effectivensss of the communication can hardly be dismissed as an accident. The speech is too well grounded in rhetorical theory for such an explanation to be plausible. It does not really matter whether the rhetor embarked upon a systematic study of the rhetorical principles set forth by Plato, Aristotle, Isocrates, Cicero, and Quintilian (an unlikely hypothesis in Ahab's case) or whether he derived his knowledge of rhetoric from a firsthand observation of the actions and attitudes of men. The important factor is that, regardless of the source of his knowledge, Ahab exhibits the qualities of an expert public speaker.

These qualities are also present in Ahab's other rhetorical discourses. While another detailed analysis of Ahab's use of persuasive devices would probably add little to one's appreciation of his skill as a rhetorician, an examination of the effects engendered by these speeches would be useful in indicating if they are bombs or bombastics.

Ahab's speech to $Starbuck_1$[40] takes place when the mate voices his opposition to the idea of hunting the white whale. Ahab solicits Starbuck's support through several persuasive techniques. For example, he attempts conciliation with the mate when he says, "I meant not to inceanse thee."[41] Ahab also points out that all of the crew is with him--all save Starbuck.[42] This line of argument subjects the mate to social and psychological pressures. The result of these and several other persuasive devices is that Starbuck acquiesces to Ahab's plea.[43] In short, the communication is successful.

It has already been established that the purpose of Ahab's speech to himself is self-persuasion. Ahab executes this goal through the use of psychologically stylistic subterfuges[44] and devices of stylistic or formal identification.[45] For example, by the use of the former Ahab identifies himself with power in the forms of dominance and unchangeability. As the dominate personality on the ship, he controls the others much as a master cog controls the lesser wheels.[46] His supremacy may be likened to a flame before ant hills of gun powder.[47] Similarly, Ahab identifies with the power of the unchangeable. His purpose is fixed; the path to it is laid with iron rails to which his soul is grooved. This identification with power allows Ahab to psychologically reinforce his attitudes thereby compensating, or perhaps over-compensating,

for any attitudinal weakening which he might feel.

The effect of this particular speech is rather difficult to measure. There are no clear-cut indications that Ahab's resolve is significantly weakening at this time. There is no definite evidence to indicate that he needs to persuade himself about any specific subject. And, most importantly, there are few really clear indexes which indicate the success or failure of the discourse. An analysis of the entire passage[49] reveals that at the end of the dialogue Ahab's assurance, determination, and confidence are seemingly greater than they were at the beginning. However, this is about the only measurement by which the success of this discourse may be accessed, and it is not an overly clear or objective one. Despite the lack of any really clear, definite, evaluative indications of success relative to Ahab's speech to himself, one can conclude that the communication is a success. Such a conclusion would be based more upon a study of the effects of Ahab's speech to $Starbuck_2$[50] than upon a study of the effects of Ahab's speech to himself. This is indicated in the following analysis of the former discourse.

It has already been pointed out that in Ahab's speech to $Starbuck_2$, in addition to any persuasive functions directed towards Starbuck, Ahab is involved in self-persuasion. When the scene opens, Ahab is depressed, melancholy, and seemingly weakened in his desire to kill Moby Dick.[51]

As the discourse progresses, Ahab engages in a variety of psychologically stylistic subterfuges which reinforce his weakened resolve to continue the quest. For example, in the first section of the discourse Ahab engages in self-pity and self-depreciation. As has been previously noted, these are tendencies which can satisfy certain neurotic needs. Observe the employment of the stylistic devices of metaphor and personification which, according to Burke, facilitate in the utilization of psychologically stylistic subterfuges.[52] Ahab, through the use of these stylistic techniques, autistically rationalizes his position until he becomes but a powerless victim of fate who can no longer be held accountable for the actions which are thrust upon him. A belief of this nature frees Ahab from responsibility and allows him to pursue the white whale, regardless of the consequences.

The effect of this self-persuasion is clearly shown by Starbuck who, like a measuring instrument, quantifies Ahab's returning resolve and indicates its increasing amount through his statements and actions. Toward the opening and middle of the speech, Starbuck endeavors to convince Ahab to give up the hunt and return home. However, as Ahab's means of self-persuasion take effect, Starbuck's pleas receive less attention until at last "...blanched to a corpse's hue with despair..."[53] he steals away.

In evaluating this communication in terms of its objective effect, it is obvious that the speech is successful in accomplishing its self-persuading goal. However, implicit in this rhetorical situation is another goal which needs to be considered. Just as Ahab is attempting to persuade himself by the use of unconscious psychological techniques, he is also trying to persuade, or dissuade, Starbuck. In essence, Ahab is endeavoring to overcome Starbuck's persuasion to return home,[54] which is directed toward him, with his own self-persuasion. Viewed from this perspective, the discourse again must be judged as a success for it dissuades Starbuck. In other words, it persuades him to curtail, at least for awhile, his attempts to persuade Ahab to abandon the hunt.

From a theoretical point of view, Ahab's speech to Starbuck and to the crew[55] is one of the most persuasive of Ahab's rhetorical discourses. During the nineteen line duration of the communication, Ahab utilizes, among others, the following persuasive techniques: (1) conciliation toward Starbuck; (2) inartistic proofs in the form of references to fate and omens;[56] (3) artistic proofs in the form of ethos, his own ethical appeal, pathos, emotive feeling aroused in the audience, and logos, maxims and enthymemes; (4) identification of himself with his crew and identification of his cause with his crew's interest; (5) exhortation.[57]

Although in the beginning of this speech Ahab is confronted with Starbuck's objections to the continuation of the chase, a careful analysis of the communication reveals that its primary purpose is not to answer Starbuck's charges. Indeed, Ahab dismisses these in four lines.[58] The goal of this discourse is rather to inspire the crew. This purpose is revealed in the exhortation when Ahab asks: "D'ye feel brave men, brave?"[59] The success of the speech is indicated by Stubb's reply that he feels as brave "as fearless fire."[60]

The purpose of this paper has been to examine five of Ahab's rhetorical discourses in order to ascertain if they are bombs or bombastics. An analysis of these speeches has revealed that amidst their obviously metaphorical language, indeed frequently arising from it, there is power. This power is predicated on something more than style, something greater than figurative language. The power of Ahab's speeches is grounded in their content[61] and developed through the correct usage of numerous rhetorical principles. This technique has produced communications which are effective instead of ineffective, successful instead of unsuccessful, bombs instead of bombastics.

FOOTNOTES

FOOTNOTES

Mr. Fadely, Ph.D. in Communications Research, is an Associate Professor of Communications Studies and Chairperson of the Pre-law program at The University of North Carolina at Greensboro.

[1]For the prupose of this paper the term rhetorical discourse may be defined as: "Those discourses, spoken or written, which aim to influence men." From Edwin Black, Rhetorical Criticism A Study in Method (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965), p. 15.

[2]In this paper bomb may be defined as a successful speech; whereas bombastic may be considered not only as unsuccessful speech, but also one which is at least partially synonymous with the term "mere rhetoric" when it is used in a derogatory sense.

As a point of information, personally, we would define the term rhetoric as the use of language (spoken, written, or bodily) to achieve result(s), end(s), or effect(s) upon auditors and the study of the result(s), end(s), or effect(s) which language achieves. Rhetoric is, therefore, directly concerned with language, what it is, how it works (or fails to work) and how it may be improved. Thus, rhetoric considered most broadly is directly concerned with modes of thought and, therefore, as Aristotle indicated, should not be passed into the region of ideas

dealing with definite subjects rather than with words and forms of reasoning for the latter are the subject matter of the field of rhetoric (The Rhetoric, 1359b). Thus, rhetoric being concerned with the use of language and reasoning may be considered a methodology or a method of thinking and acting which is applicable to many subjects.

[3]Herman Melville, Moby-Dick ed. Alfred Kazin (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1956), pp. 137-138, pp. 139-140, pp. 142-143, pp. 408-410, pp. 422-423. Unless otherwise specified, all references to Moby-Dick will be taken from the Riverside Edition, Houghton Mifflin Company publishers.

[4]Black, p. 15.

[5]For a thorough discussion of why rhetorical discourse must be limited to persuasion see: Kenneth Burke, A Rhetoric of Motives (New York: Meridan Books The World Publishing Company, 1962). Marie Hochmuth Michols, Rhetoric and Criticism (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1963), pp. 79-92. Black, pp. 10-19.

[6]Black, p. 15.

[7]Robert T. Oliver, "Philosophy, Rhetoric, and Argumentation: Congenial or Conjunctive?" in Philosophy Rhetoric and Argumentation, eds. Maurice Natanson and Henry W. Johnstone Jr. (University Park, Pennsylvannia: The Pennsylvannia State University Press, 1965), pp. ix-x.

[8]Melville, p. 154.

[9]Ibid., p. 139. The text of the passage is as follows: "And this what ye have shipped for men! to chase that white whale on both sides of land, and over all sides of earth, till he spouts black blood and rolls fin out."

[10]Oliver, p. x.

[11]Burke, pp. 573-574.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid., pp. 562-570.

[14]Oliver, pp. ix-x.

[15]For a more complete discussion of stylistic or formal identification see: Burke, pp. 581-583.

[16]Burke, p. 570.

[17]Melville, pp. 408-409.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Ibid., p. 410.

[20]Aristotle, The Rhetoric of Aristotle, trans. Lane Cooper (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1932), p. 7. In this passage Aristotle sets forth what has become a classic definition of rhetoric by defining it as "...the faculty of discovering in the particular case what are the available means of persuasion."

[21]The text of this speech may be found on pages 137-138 in Moby-Dick.

[22]Melville, p. 137.

[23]Ibid.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Ibid.

[26]For an excellent discussion concerning the use of the rhetorical question and several other of the more important methods which a persuasive speaker might find desirable to use when commencing his address see: Wayne C. Minnick, The Art of Persuasion (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1957), pp. 125-131.

[27]Melville, p. 137.

[28]Burke, p. 548.

[29]Melville, p. 137.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Ibid., p. 138.

[32]William James, Psychology, Briefer Course (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1892), p. 448.

[33]J.R. Angell, Psychology (New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston, 1908), p. 402.

[34]H.A. Overstreet, Influencing Human Behavior (New York: Norton Publishing Company, 1925), p. 9.

[35]James A. Winans, Public Speaking (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1915), p. 194.

[36]Melville, p. 139.

[37]Ibid.

[38]Ibid., p. 144.

[39]Ibid., p. 149-150.

[40]Ibid., pp. 139-140.

[41]Ibid.

[42]Ibid., p. 140.

[43]Ibid., p. 140, p. 142, p. 143, p. 144.

[44]Burke, pp. 562-570.

[45]Ibid., pp. 581-583.

[46]Melville, p. 142.

[47]Ibid.

[48]Ibid.

[49]Ibid., pp. 142-143.

[50]Ibid., pp. 408-410.

[51]Ibid., p. 408.

[52]Melville, p. 410.

[53]Ibid.

[54]Ibid., p. 409.

[55]Ibid. p. 422-423.

[56]Aristotle, pp. 80-89. In this passage Ahab's references to fate and omens are related to Aristotle's treatment of ancient witnesses, an omen being a form of testimony from either the gods or the soothsayers while the fates were ancient witnesses in their own right.

[57]Melville, p. 422-423.

[58]Ibid., p. 422.

[59]Ibid., p. 423.

[60]Ibid.

[61]Content, in this sense, refers to the arguments or contentions which the rhetor utilizes to support his thesis or specific purpose as well as to the proofs which are employed to substantiate these arguments or contentions. This definition in noway seeks to imply that Ahab's speeches are without philosophical and/or aesthetic qualities which may be present for their own sake as well as for probative purposes. What this definition does indicate, however, is that a consideration of content which is present only for its philosophical and/or aesthetic properties and is non-probative relative to the thesis or specific purpose of the speech lies outside the scope of this paper.